

REMARKS

In view of the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject application. This amendment is believed to be fully responsive to all issues raised in the Office Action mailed
5 August 2, 2004.

Claim Objections

Applicant traverses the objection issued with respect to claim 1. The claim elements are correctly identified and consistent with the specification in
10 their present form.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,710,777 to Gawne (hereinafter, "the
15 '777 patent").

Each of independent claims 1, 8, 11, and 12 recites limitations directed to transmitting either a disable signal or an enable signal on a communication bus separate from the communication network. The '777 patent neither discloses nor suggests transmitting a disable signal or an
20 enable signal on a communication bus that is separate from the communication network. Contrary to the assertion in the Action, the communication paths between the bypass switches and the end stations are part of the communication network described in the '777 patent. Accordingly, the '777 patent cannot render obvious any of independent
25 claims 1, 8, 11, or 12.

New claims 13-14 add limitations neither disclosed nor suggested in the '777 patent.

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CONCLUSION

Claims 1-14 are in believed to be in condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt issuance of the present application. Should any issue remain that prevents immediate

5 issuance of the application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney to discuss the unresolved issue.

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Respectfully Submitted,
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